SUPERINTENDENT OF DOCUMENTS POLICY STATEMENT

EFFECTIVE DATE: September 28, 2006

Supersedes
No.: SOD 301
Dated: 06/12/2006

Incorporates
No.: SOD 13
Dated: 8/22/1983

Subject: Dissemination/Distribution Policy for the Federal Depository Library Program

---

Purpose

To provide guidance and instruction for determining the format of materials disseminated/ distributed to Federal depository libraries.

Policy

Criteria for inclusion of U.S. Government information products in the Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP) are defined in 44 U.S.C. Sec.1902. Regardless of format, all FDLP publications must conform to the definition of Government publication in 44 U.S.C. Sec. 1901, that is, informational matter which is published as an individual document at Government expense, or as required by law.

Once the determination is made to include a product in the FDLP, the Library Services and Content Management business unit (LS&CM) will determine the best method for making government information products available to the depository libraries. When more than one format exists for a product, LS&CM will determine how to best provide the information by assessing:

(a) How the product will be used;
(b) The specific characteristics of the online and/or tangible product;
(c) Issues relating to permanent public access; and
(d) The cost of providing the material.

While distribution of tangible information remains an important part of the program, the FDLP now exists in a Federal information environment where over 90% of all titles made available through the Federal Depository Library Program are online, whether or not they are also available in tangible form. As a result, GPO acknowledges a concomitant responsibility for permanent public access to a comprehensive collection of digital content to provide access to users wherever they may be and whenever they require the information.

With multiple formats available for many publications, specific product characteristics may

dictate that one format is preferable to another for library use. LS&CM will use the following guidelines to determine the most appropriate method of dissemination to depository libraries.

Guidelines

Determination of the best method for making a product available to depository libraries is made at the time of notification and product selection. If additional information regarding the nature of the publication becomes available, modifications to the original dissemination decision may be made.

1. When a product is only available online, it will be disseminated in online format.

2. When a product is only available in tangible format, LS&CM will create an electronic version to substitute for tangible distribution if it is not an essential title and one or more of the following conditions exist:

    a. The digital conversion results in better functionality of the product and is an authentic representation of the original;
    b. The publishing agency does not provide sufficient copies for tangible distribution; and
    c. The cost of printing and distributing the tangible product is prohibitive due to its characteristics.

3. When the product is available both online and in a tangible format, GPO will disseminate the online version to depository libraries. Tangible versions will be offered as well, budget permitting.

    At the time an online publication is identified for inclusion in the FDLP, it is captured and stored in the GPO electronic archive, unless GPO has an interagency agreement for permanent public access to the material. A tangible product will always be offered when the online version is:

    a. Incomplete. For example:
        - Online products that contain only selected or abstracted portions of the content provided in its entirety in the tangible product, or
        - Kits comprised of mixed media tangible products where only a portion of the title is online.
    b. Not recognized by the publishing agency as the controlling official version of a publication. That is, the publication is placed online for informational purposes and when discrepancies exist between the tangible and online versions, the tangible version takes precedence and is viewed as the controlling official version.[1]
    c. Not easily identifiable as an official publication. For example, this can occur when the electronic version is on a non-verifiable Government or unofficial web site.

[1] This situation arises most often with legal materials such as administrative and court decisions and codes. When used to meet legal requirements, the online versions should be verified against the controlling official tangible versions and the tangible versions should be used in legal citations. Titles that fall into this category include, but are not limited to, *Agriculture Decisions, U.S. Reports,* and *United States Code.*

d. Very difficult to use, thus impeding access to data or content. For example this can occur when the product design imposes technological barriers to usage.

e. Not cost-effective. The costs associated with disseminating the online product exceed those for the tangible product.

f. Fee-based, and created, all or in part, through the use of non-appropriated funds. For example, this can occur when the publishing agency designates the product as cooperative as provided in 44 U.S.C. Sec. 1903.

4. If a product is disseminated to depository libraries online and a tangible format is available, the tangible product will also be distributed if the tangible product meets special conditions or needs, i.e., when:

   a. There is a legal requirement to distribute the product in tangible format, e.g., Journals of the House and Senate;

   b. The tangible product is of significant reference value to most types of FDLP libraries, as may be the case with certain compilations, legal resources, permanent legal records or products of historical importance;

   c. The tangible product is intended to serve a special needs population. For example, this could occur when the publication is in Braille or large print;

   d. The commonly accepted medium of the user community is tangible format. For example, this could apply to maps and/or charts; or

   e. The product is essential to the conduct of Government. GPO has identified a list of "Essential Titles for Public Use in Paper or Other Tangible Format" [http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/fdlp/pubs/estitles.html]. When those titles are published in tangible format they will be made available for selection by depository libraries in that format.

      - If an agency ceases to publish an Essential Title in tangible format in favor of online dissemination, GPO will request electronic files suitable for printing from the publishing agency and its authorization to reproduce and distribute the title to depository libraries.

5. Certain Congressional publications will continue to be made available for selection by depository libraries in paper format. By Congressional request depositories will be able to receive paper versions of reports, hearings, documents, and prints with the following Superintendent of Documents Classification stems:

• Y 1.1/2: - Y 1.1/8:	• Y 1.3s	• Y 4s	• Y 10.17:
• Y 1.2 – Y 1.2/8:	• Y 1.5:	• Y 7.1:	• Y 10.19:

6. Microfiche will continue to be a format used for dissemination, when appropriate and justifiable. Titles provided to GPO in microfiche by agency publishers will be distributed in microfiche. GPO will continue to produce microfiche as an additional tangible distribution format for Congressional publications and the Federal Register and its related titles.

   a. Congressional Publications. GPO will continue to produce microfiche as an

additional tangible distribution format for the following Congressional publications:

- House and Senate Journals (XJH: , 1030-B; XJS: , 1047-B)
- Congressional Record Index and Daily Digest (X 1.1: , 0993-C)
- Congressional Record (daily)(X 1.1/A: , 0994-C)
- Serial Set: House and Senate Documents (Y 1.1/2: , 0996-B)
- Serial Set: House and Senate Reports (Y 1.1/2: , 1008-D)
- Senate Documents (Y 1.1/3: , 0996-B)
- Senate Treaty Documents (Y 1.1/4: , 0996-B)
- Senate Reports (Y 1.1/5: , 1008-D)
- Senate Executive Reports (Y 1.1/6: , 1008-D)
- House Documents (Y 1.1/7: , 0996-B)
- House Reports (Y 1.1./8: , 0996-B)
- General Publications, House (Y 1.2: , 0998)
- List of Standing Committees, House (Y 1.2/6: , 0998)
- Telephone Directory, House (Y1.2/7: , 0998)
- General Publications, Senate (Y 1.3: , 0998-A-01)
- Calendar of Business, Senate (Y 1.3/3: , 0998-B)
- Journal of Executive Proceedings of the U.S. Senate (Y 1.3/4: , 1047-D)
- List of Standing Committees, Senate (Y 1.3/9: , 0998-A-01)
- Hearings, prints, reports and publications from Congressional committees (Y 4. SuDoc stems and item numbers vary with committee)
- Memorial Addresses (Y 7.1: , 1005-I-500)
- Background Papers (Y 10.9: , 1005-A)
- Budget Issue Papers (Y 10.12: , 1005-E)
- List of Publications (Y10.14: , 1005-G)
- Responsibilities and Organization (Y10.20: , 1005-E)

b. Federal Register. GPO will continue to produce microfiche as an additional tangible distribution format for the Federal Register and its related titles:

- Federal Register (daily)(AE 2.106: , item 0573-D)
- LSA, List of Sections Affected (monthly)(AE 2.106/2: , item 0573-D)
- Code of Federal Regulations (AE 2.106/3: , item 0573-D)

c. Exceptions. When microfiche is being considered as the format of choice for distribution, a review of each publication's physical characteristics should be made to validate its suitability for microfiche conversion. This evaluation should determine if the publication has characteristics that preclude the use of microfiche as a distribution option, including:

- Height greater than 11" (or width greater than 14", including publications that contain foldouts or are accompanied by other materials that exceed 11" high or 14" wide;

- Color or half-tone illustrations that are essential for use;
- Continuous tone photographs;
- Characters that are illegible or smaller than six-point type;
- Updates and inserts required (e.g., loose-leaf services); and
- Paper other than white.

If the evaluation indicates the publication is not suitable for conversion to microfiche because it has one or more of these characteristics (e.g., United States Senate Catalogue of Fine Art), other format options, such as paper or digitization, must be evaluated following this policy.

7. A product published in tangible format will be distributed as such if the publishing agency stipulates that the product format would lose its utility if converted to electronic form, e.g., Survey of Current Business.

8. In order to place electronic versions of all in scope documents in the FDLP Electronic Collection for preservation and dissemination, LS&CM may convert from tangible to electronic format if an electronic copy cannot be obtained. The costs of the conversion process, suitability of the material, and the official status of the resulting online or tangible electronic version are some important factors in determining conversion.

Scope

This policy pertains to all U.S. Government information products subject to dissemination/distribution to depository libraries as provided in 44 U.S.C. Sec. 1901-1903.

Application

The Superintendent of Documents, through LS&CM, is responsible for ensuring that all publications are disseminated and/or distributed to depository libraries in the most effective manner.

Document Terminology

Authentic:	Content that is verified by GPO to be complete and unaltered when compared to the version approved or published by the Content Originator.
Dissemination:	The act of making government information products accessible to depository libraries.
Distribution:	Applying FDLP information and services to a tangible product and sending a tangible copy to depository libraries.
Online Dissemination:	Applying FDLP information and services to an online product and announcing it to depository libraries.
Online Format:	The product is published at a publicly accessible Internet site.
Product:	A publication regardless of presentation media or format.

Tangible Product: Information conveyed on a physical medium. Tangible products may be in traditional print format, i.e., paper or microfiche, or in tangible electronic format, i.e. video, diskette, magnetic tape, CD-ROM, optical disk, or successor technology.

References:

"A Strategic Vision for the 21st Century: December 1, 2004", U.S. Government Printing Office, 2005.

"Depository Library Program," Title 44 U.S. Code, Sec. 1901-1916, 1994 ed.

MacGilvray, Marian W. and John M. Walters. Electronic Capabilities of Federal Depository Libraries, Summer 1994. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1995.

"Priorities for Disseminating Electronic Products and Services from the U.S. Government Printing Office." Documents to the People, 20, no. 2 (June 1992): 78-79.

U.S. Government Printing Office. Report to the Congress: Study to Identify Measures Necessary for a Successful Transition to a More Electronic Federal Depository Library Program, as required by Legislative Branch Appropriations Act, 1996, Public Law 104-53. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1996.

U.S. Government Printing Office. Library Programs Service. Managing the FDLP Electronic Collection: A Policy and Planning Document. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1998.

U.S. House. Making Appropriations for the Legislative Branch for the Fiscal Year Ending September 30, 2001, and for Other Purposes. Conference Report (H. Rpt. 106-796). Washington: Government Printing Office, 2000.

U.S. National Commission on Libraries and Information Science. Report on the Assessment of Electronic Government Information Products, prepared by Westat, Rockville, Md. Washington: Government Printing Office, March 30, 1999.

Recommended _____
Director, Library Services and Content Management

Approved _____
Superintendent of Documents